



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 5571

February Session, 2002

***AN ACT CONCERNING DAMAGES FOR THE UNLAWFUL KILLING OR
INJURING OF A COMPANION ANIMAL.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2002*) (a) For the purposes of
2 this section, "companion animal" means a domesticated, warm-
3 blooded animal that is normally kept in or near the household of its
4 owner or keeper and is dependent on a person for food, shelter and
5 veterinary care, but does not include an animal kept for farming or
6 biomedical research practices.

7 (b) Any person who intentionally kills or injures a companion
8 animal, except in defense of such person or another person or as
9 otherwise authorized by law, shall be liable to the owner of such
10 companion animal for economic damages sustained by such owner
11 including, but not limited to, expenses of veterinary care, the fair
12 monetary value of a deceased companion animal and burial expenses
13 for a deceased companion animal.

14 (c) In addition to any economic damages awarded pursuant to
15 subsection (b) of this section, the court may award punitive damages
16 in an amount not to exceed the jurisdictional monetary limit
17 established by subsection (d) of section 51-15 of the general statutes, as
18 amended, together with a reasonable attorney's fee.

19 (d) The provisions of subsection (c) of this section shall not apply to:

20 (1) A veterinarian licensed pursuant to chapter 384 of the general
21 statutes while following accepted standards of practice of the
22 profession, (2) the state or any political subdivision of the state or any
23 employee, officer or agent thereof while acting within the scope of
24 such employee's, officer's or agent's employment or official duties, or
25 (3) an employee of or volunteer for a nonprofit organization or
26 nonprofit corporation organized and operated exclusively for the
27 prevention of cruelty to animals or the protection of stray, abandoned
28 or mistreated animals while acting within the scope of such employee's
29 or volunteer's employment or duties.

30 Sec. 2. Section 22-351 of the general statutes is repealed and the
31 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2002*):

32 (a) Any person who steals, confines or conceals any [dog]
33 companion animal, as defined in section 1 of this act, or who, with the
34 intention of stealing such [dog] companion animal or concealing its
35 identity or the identity of its owner or with the intention of concealing
36 the fact that the [dog] companion animal is licensed, removes the collar
37 or harness or tag from any licensed [dog] companion animal, or who
38 unlawfully kills or injures any [dog] companion animal, shall be fined
39 not more than [two hundred] one thousand dollars or imprisoned not
40 more than six months or both, [and shall also be liable to the owner in
41 a civil action.] For a second offense, or for an offense involving more
42 than one [dog] companion animal, any such person shall be fined not
43 more than [five hundred] two thousand dollars or imprisoned not less
44 than one year nor more than three years or be both fined and
45 imprisoned.

46 (b) Any person who violates the provisions of subsection (a) of this
47 section shall be liable to the owner in a civil action, except that, if such
48 person intentionally kills or injures any companion animal, such
49 person shall be liable to the owner in a civil action as provided in
50 section 1 of this act.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2002</i>
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2002</i>

JUD *Joint Favorable Subst.*